

Connections

A Publication for Employees of the Missouri Department of Transportation

January 16, 2014

Commission Meeting Highlights

by Bob Brendel

Central Office

Because of ongoing uncertainty associated with federal funding, and the continued erosion of state transportation revenues, the Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission has suspended the addition of projects to the 2015-19 Statewide Transportation Improvement Program and the cost share/economic development program.

Districts

Northwest

The MHTC took the strong actions at their Jan. 8 meeting, which was conducted as a teleconference after winter weather forced cancellation of the regular meeting that was to be held in Columbia.

Northeast

Chief Financial Officer Roberta Broeker explained that MoDOT had revised its financial forecast based on ongoing uncertainty associated with federal funding and continued erosion of state transportation revenues. The projection is that MoDOT's construction program will be just over \$700 million for 2015, dropping to \$600 million in 2016 and to just more than \$300 million each year in 2017 through 2019. At those levels, MoDOT will be unable to adequately maintain the current system of roads and bridges.

Kansas City

Central

And, by 2020, MoDOT will be unable to match federal funds, meaning that Missouri could miss out on as much as \$186 million that would be distributed to other states. Only additional state revenues could stave off that result.

St. Louis

Southwest

"This is a pretty dramatic action by the Commission," Chairman Joe Carmichael said, "but one that is necessitated by the situation in which we find ourselves."

Southeast

The Commission also heard a presentation from Risk and Benefits Management Director Jeff Padgett on proposed changes to MoDOT and MSHP's medical insurance plan. The recommendations grew out of a special committee appointed in 2012 by former Commission Chairman Rudy Farber to gain employee and retiree input on plan changes necessitated by rising costs and declining revenue.

Archives

Print Page

Print
Entire Edition

Padgett said the committee agreed on several points:

- Active employees should pay 20 percent of their premiums.
- Each medical plan category should be self-sustaining and not subsidized by any other categories.
- Employer contributions for retirees should be based upon years of service the employee provided as an active employee.

The Commission is expected to act on the recommendations at its Feb. 11 meeting in Jefferson City.

Public Presentations – The Commission heard two presentations from the City of Columbia: City Manager Mike Matthes and Vickie Russell, Columbia Daily Tribune publisher and president of Regional Economic Development Inc. Both talked about the importance of Interstate 70 to Columbia and its need for improvement.



"Columbia is a big fan of MoDOT," Matthes said, but he called attention to "that seven-mile stretch of I-70 through Columbia. Nine days out of 10 there's an accident out there. So we worry about safety. And that U.S. 63/I-70 interchange ... one crazy intersection."

Russell gave a historical perspective of I-70 across the state, saying that as far back as 1905 a road from St. Louis to Kansas City, through Boone County, was needed. Former Tribune editor Edwin Watson wrote, "The future depends on that cross-state highway."

She said it is just as important today. "I-70 means everything to Columbia and Missouri," Russell said, and she gave three case studies of just how important interstate access is to three local companies – Dohrn Transfer Company, Machens Automotive Group and her own company – the Tribune and Tribune Publishing.

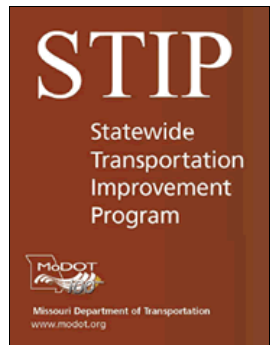
The Commission also heard from Dr. Jeffrey Coughenour, assistant professor of surgery and emergency medicine at the University of Missouri, about highway safety and emergency medical care in rural Missouri. He noted 20 percent of Missouri's population is rural, but that rural Missouri accounts for 60 percent of trauma deaths. He said progress has been made in the areas of restraint and helmet use, law enforcement and DWI initiatives, older driver screening, substance abuse, infrastructure engineering and acute care, but "we can do better."

Commission Items – Commissioner Bryan Scott was elected to the board of directors of the Missouri Transportation Finance Corporation.

Commissioner Ken Suelthaus reported that State Auditor Tom Schweich began an audit of MoDOT in December. Suelthaus also recapped the last meeting of the MoDOT and Patrol Employees' Retirement System Board of Trustees, saying that the last fiscal year was a good year for MPERS investments with an increased return of about 14 percent.

Vice Chairman Stephen Miller announced the opening of the 2014 legislative session and said reduction of state income taxes and campaign finance reform were expected to be focal points of this session. He also said no specific transportation issues have surfaced, but he has every expectation that legislative action or an initiative petition will be advanced to increase transportation funding.

Director's Report – Dave Nichols reviewed MoDOT's winter operations to date, and thanked employees for the dedicated service they had provided



under trying weather conditions, on weekends and around the holidays. He also cited the heroism displayed by Kansas City District senior maintenance worker David Winship, who while treating bridges in Clay County saw smoke from beyond the guardrail, down an embankment. He discovered a woman trapped in her car. After calling 911, he cut the convertible's top open with his pocket knife and pulled the woman to safety.

Nichols also explained that snow removal comes with a price. Over the past five years, MoDOT has spent an average of \$42 million per year to plow snow. Already this year, \$30 million has been expended on overtime, fuel, salt and other de-icing agents, equipment maintenance, etc.

U.S. Route 69 Bridges Over the Missouri River Environmental Assessment – The Commission approved the location for new U.S. Route 69 bridges in Kansas City. The approval allows the design-build procurement effort to get underway.

2015 Medical Proposed Medical Plan Changes

by Jeff Padgett

I hope every employee has heard about the Commission's proposed changes to our medical insurance plan. The Commission has always made a priority of providing excellent and affordable medical benefits, and is considering the changes so we can continue providing these benefits in spite of the rising cost for medical insurance and declining revenue.

The basic changes are:

- All active employees would pay 20 percent of the premium cost, while the Commission would pay 80 percent, a change we have been moving towards for several years.
- All employees who retire on or after Jan. 1, 2015 would pay a premium cost based on their years of service. The Commission would cover two percent per year of service, not to exceed 50 percent of the total cost. If you worked for MoDOT for 22 years, for example, the Commission would pay 44 percent of your monthly premium.

Please take time to review the details on these proposed changes at [Proposed Medical Plan Changes](#), or ask your supervisor for assistance. Here you will find an overview document, FAQs, and a premium calculator that allows employees to calculate premium cost upon retirement.

The online FAQ document has recently been updated. We will continue updating this document over the next few weeks to help address employee questions, so please make sure to check for up-to-date information.

The Commission would like to get employee feedback. Details on submitting comments are included in the online information. You can provide comments through Feb. 1 by:

- Using the link above
- Using the [Employee Concern Form](#), or
- Mailing a written comment to the EAC

The comments will be summarized and provided to the Commission for review. The proposed changes will be discussed at the Commission's Feb. 11 meeting, and a decision is expected to be made.

Every employee's situation is different, so it is important that you understand how these changes may affect you. Please review the information, submit comments, and if you have questions contact your local benefits staff for assistance.

Team Talk

by Roberta Broecker

Hello Team MoDOT. Last week our director of Risk and Benefits Management, Jeff Padgett, sent an email to all employees regarding some potential changes to MoDOT's medical insurance. The changes will have the biggest impact on future retirees. If you haven't had a chance to look at the information, I wanted to take a few minutes to tell you why you should.

We've known for many years now that MoDOT's revenue is shrinking and costs are going up. It's the reality we predicted and for which we've prepared. We continue to face difficult decisions because we don't have enough resources to do all we need to do for our transportation system.

Our funding situation affects everything we do at MoDOT, including the medical benefits we offer employees and retirees. The Commission has been working for several years to find a way to manage rising costs, keep the plan affordable for employees, and at the same time make sure that the department can handle its share of the expense in the face of a shrinking revenue stream. The changes they're assessing now will help keep the plan within the department's budget.

You can read more about the proposed changes in this issue of Connections, or you check out the information at [Proposed Medical Plan Changes](#).

My request to you is this: Think about what the changes mean to you directly. How these changes could affect you will be determined by many factors – such as the subscriber category you're enrolled in, your years of service, when you are

eligible to retire, and when you may want to retire. No two employees' situations are exactly alike.

If you're an active employee and you're thinking about retiring in the next year or two, try out the premium calculator to see how your benefit changes if you retire in 2015 instead of 2014. If your retirement date is still a long way off, think about how your years of service can affect the monthly premium you could be paying down the road.

Once you've reviewed everything, you have an opportunity to let us know what you think. Our benefits staff has created an easy link for you to submit



comments from the web. The comment form is available at the link included above. Jeff and I have been reading the comments as they come in, and when they include questions, adding those to the Frequently Asked Questions document...you guessed it...also at the link.

The best decisions are well-informed ones. Use the tools to help you be well-informed. Ask questions if you have them. Thank you for all you do.

Outlook Project Nearing The End

by Amie Peters

We're in the home stretch with Outlook migrations. The majority of MoDOT has been converted and soon we'll be out from under the co-existence issues of living with two email systems. Next we'll focus our attention on moving Lotus Notes mail groups to Outlook so you can start using them in meeting invites and other areas. We'll also be implementing the Outlook Rooms & Reservations piece, which displays conference room availability. Co-existence can be frustrating at times, but thanks for hanging in there - it's almost over!

As with anything new, there is a learning curve. Outlook introduces several new features we didn't previously have in Lotus Notes. The 'Junk' folder is one such feature, and it could cause you trouble if you're not aware of it. Outlook can automatically flag incoming mail as spam or junk and direct it to the junk folder. It's a good idea to periodically review what's in the Junk folder and look for any emails that were incorrectly flagged. Follow these easy steps ([Junk Folder Instructions](#)) to change what's sent to the Junk folder.

Need to quickly collaborate with one or more co-workers? Show your desktop to others in an online meeting? See when people are available? If so, then Lync is the tool for you! It was rolled out with Outlook, but you won't find it inside your mailbox like Sametime. To get started, go to the Start menu and click on Lync. Look for more information in coming articles, but in the meantime check out the [training page](#) to get Lync'd up.

Thanks again for all your support throughout this migration.



Save The Date

Like last year, the DOMInno Conference will bring together maintenance, operations, traffic, and other employees, with the Innovations Showcase kicking off the three day event.

The showcase and conference starts on April 8 and concludes on April 10 at the University Plaza Hotel and Convention Center in Springfield. The Innovations Challenge will be held in the Expo Hall and the meetings held in the Hotel and Convention Center. Details for registration will be coming at a later date.

Draft Timeline of Events:

Innovations Challenge Showcase set up

Monday, April 7 - 10 am - 4 pm:

Innovations Challenge Showcase

Tuesday, April 8 - 8:30 am to 2 pm: Innovations Challenge and Lunch in the Expo Hall

Opening General Sessions

Tuesday, April 8 - 2 pm to 5 pm: General Session (Combined)

General Sessions and Breakout Sessions

Wednesday, April 9 - 8 am to 11:30 am: Separate General Sessions and Breakouts (TBA)

Wednesday, April 9 - 11:30 am to 1 pm: Lunch (provided)

Wednesday, April 9 - 1 pm to 5 pm: Breakout Sessions (TBA)

Closing General Session

Thursday, April 10 - 8 am to 10 am: Breakout Sessions (TBA)

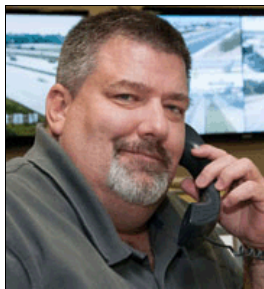
Thursday, April 10 - 10 am to 10:20 am: Break

Thursday, April 10 - 10:20 am to noon: General Session (Combined)

April 2014						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19

During Winter Events, Who You Gonna Call?

by Jeff Still



Jeff Still is a Customer Service

For thousands of Missouri customers, the MoDOT customer service center is a resource for construction questions, a complaint line for potholes, or a reporting tool for dead animal pick up. But when the weather turns nasty, the center becomes a life line for critical questions on safety.

The amount of calls the MoDOT call center receives during inclement weather is staggering. Even people who are computer savvy and use the Traveler Map will often call just to make sure they are reading it accurately.

The types of callers also changes. Parents with homebound college students during the holidays will check in to make sure the roads are safe for their drive home. People trying to get to or go home from work will check if their commute is clear. The calls all have the same theme, "Should I stay or should I go?"

On an average day at the Kansas City call center, we field about 150 to 300 calls. During a winter event, that number can double. Statewide, MoDOT's customer service centers take an average of 600 calls on weekdays and 200 over the weekends. During December, when we had several winter events, we handled an average of 3,400 calls per day

Manager in the Kansas City District. statewide. On December 21 alone, MoDOT customer service centers handled over 5,000 calls.

When winter storms hit, volunteers man the phones alongside seasoned call representatives with the goal of making sure every driver is informed and every call gets answered so everyone can make it to their destinations safely.

Check Your Pay Stub!

by Suzette Kempker

It's that time of year again when we start seeing changes in our pay checks. Your net pay changes if your salary or deductions (health insurance, cafeteria plan, deferred comp, etc.) change. Make sure the amounts are right. You should review your electronic check stub regularly to make sure your pay, deductions and leave balances are correct.

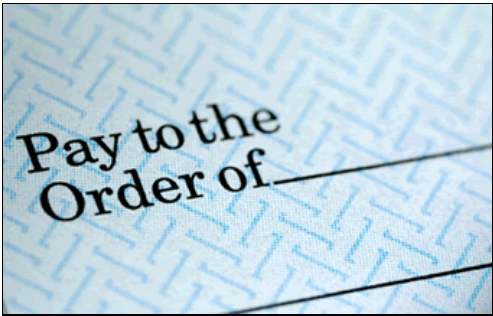
Check your address too. It is important to make sure the address on your electronic check stub is correct. W-2s will be mailed to your home address this month. Make sure the address is current to avoid delays in delivery.

The Jan. 15 paycheck may change as a result of the any of the following:

- Federal and State Taxes
- Cafeteria Plan
- Delta Dental and National Vision Administrators
- Missouri State Charitable Campaign
- Optional Life Insurance

Additionally, the pay increase for all employees that starts Jan. 1 will begin with your Jan. 31 paycheck.

If you have any questions, please contact your district or division payroll representative or Financial Services Payroll section.



Fatality Update



What's Happening



New TMA Safety Video

A new safety operation video on TMA (truck-mounted attenuator) safety has been added to our online video library. Employees may recall we created a TMA safety video last year. However, as we continually work to find ways to improve our processes and work more safely, there were several important points we wanted to highlight.

Link – <http://www.intranet/SafetyVideos.htm> (these videos can be downloaded to a flash drive or computer desktop for faster viewing).

Supervisors are asked to use the new video to lead morning safety talks when TMA's are a part of the day's operation.



Governor's Tweet of Thanks

Governor Jay Nixon tweeted appreciation for MoDOT crews during the storm that started on Jan. 5. The tweet read, "Appreciate@MoDOT crews working around the clock to clear roads. Tough & important job."

Paying Tribute to a Beloved Coworker and Friend

The MoDOT Team recently lost their coworker and friend, Human Resources Manager Steve Hermann. Visit



the Southeast District's Connections page to hear about this amazing person as told through photos and personal memories of family and coworkers - [Southeast District Page](#)

January Service Anniversaries

35 Years

Ralph M. Morriss – NW

30 Years

Anthony John McGaughy - NW
Mark A. Strobel - CD
James K. Schmidt - SL
Lawrence Eugene Welty - SL
Gregory A. Wilhelm - SL
Sheldon C. Bennett - SL
James L. Conley - SW
Tracy E. Davault - SW
Reginald B. House - SE
Patrick A. Martens - CO
Edward W. Hassinger - CO
Shelley J. Kloeppel - CO
Renate Anna Wilkinson – CO

25 Years

Barbara Jean Stegner - KC
Steven W. Engelbrecht - CD
Scott J. Washausen - SL
John Charles Lewis - SL
William M. McLaughlin - SL
Edward J. Muehlenkamp - SL
Richard Ray Pilcher - SW
Roy Gene Gaither - SE
Kevin W. McLain - CO
Randy Jane Kelley - CO
Daniel J. Smith - CO
Pamela Fay Richter – CO

20 Years

Janique Minette Flora - NW
Erik J. Maninga - NE
Erin Leigh Gruber - NE
Daniel E. Bassett - CD
Timothy J. Schroeder - SL
Dennis J. Mazur - SL
Kristy Leigh Pettit - SE
Scottie L. Smith – SE

15 Years

Jeffrey R. Burns - NW
Alphonse F. Dames - NE
Shane Irvin Viers - NE
Donald Eugene Drebes - NE
Stephen Ray Porter - KC
Joshua John Scott - KC
Wesley E. Squire - KC
Jacob D. Ray - CD
Delton R. Jones - CD
Thomas J. Evers - SL
Danny J. Bowling - SW
Jessie James Eidson - SW
Michael C. Middleton - SW
Jason M. Williams - SE
Jason Wade Norris - SE
Danica D. Stovall-Taylor – CO

10 Years

Randy L. Bland - NE
Randall Eugene Easley - KC
Telisa May Anderson - KC
Darin J. Pryor - CD
Eddie M. Frazier - CD
Jarrett A. Reedy - CD
Ronald L. Peterson - SL
Michael L. Robinson - SL
Micheal R. Bock - SW
Joseph N. Boggs - SE
Louis Michael Ochs - SE
Suzette C. Kempker - CO
Victoria L. McElwaine – CO

5 Years

Gary L. Overkamp - NE
Travis L. Schilling - KC
Joshua Ray Tinkey - KC
Derek R. Anderson - KC
Matthew B. Daulton - KC
Nettie J. Golston - KC
Christopher B. Leeks - KC
Philip Beau Alexander Wooden - KC
Benjamin J. Rankin - CD
Joseph V. Conley - SL
Michael Earl Ferguson - SL
Anastasia M. Smith - SL
Timothy J. Ott - SL
Jeanette K. Ruggeri - SL
Justin G. Wagner - SL
Corey A. Ennes - SW
Leslie A. Griffitt - SW
Gerard L. Scherer - SE
Demarcus N. Thatch - SE
Dane L. Scott - SE
Marissa V. Robertson - SE
April J. Hendricks-Brown - CO
Wendy R. Werner - CO
Carrie Wolken - CO

Connections

The mission of Connections is to be a source of Missouri Department of Transportation news and feature articles that connect employees statewide.

Customer Relations - MoDOT
P.O. Box 270, Jefferson City, MO 65102
573.751.2840 / www.modot.org

Editor: Tammy Wallace

Comments & Suggestions

We would like to hear from you. Send comments and suggestions to Tammy Wallace at Tammy.Wallace@modot.mo.gov.

Mission

Our mission is to provide a world-class transportation experience that delights our customers and promotes a prosperous Missouri.

To view or print other pages, click on the links below:



January 16, 2014



- Home
- Central Office

Districts

- Northwest
- Northeast
- Kansas City
- Central
- St. Louis
- Southwest
- Southeast

Archives

Print Page

Print Entire Edition

Cold Weather Survival

January is the coldest month in Missouri, and prolonged exposure to low temperatures, wind and moisture can result in frostbite and hypothermia. Here are some suggestions on how to keep warm and avoid winter dangers:

- Wear several layers of clothing - choose a coat with wind and waterproof layers.
- Wear a hat, scarf and turtleneck sweater - the head and neck lose heat faster than any other part of the body, and cheeks, ears and nose are the most prone to frostbite.

Frostbite - What to Look For

- The extent of frostbite is difficult to judge until hours later.
- Superficial frostbite is characterized by white, waxy or grayish-yellow patches on the affected areas. The skin feels cold and numb. The skin surface feels stiff and tissue feels soft when depressed.
- Deep frostbite is characterized by waxy and pale skin. The affected parts feel cold, hard, and solid and cannot be depressed. Large blisters may appear after re-warming.



Frostbite - What to Do

- Get the victim out of the cold and to a warm place immediately.
- Remove any constrictive clothing items and jewelry that could impair circulation.
- Seek medical attention immediately.

Hypothermia - What to Look For

- Hypothermia occurs when the body loses more heat than it produces.
- Symptoms include a change in mental status, uncontrollable shivering, a cool abdomen and a low core body temperature.
- Severe hypothermia may cause rigid muscles, dark and puffy skin, irregular heartbeat and respiration, and unconsciousness.

Hypothermia - What to Do

- Get the victim out of the cold.
- Lay the victim flat and add insulation such as blankets, pillows, towels or newspapers beneath and around the victim.
- Seek medical attention immediately.

Be Prepared

- Hypothermia and frostbite happen most frequently when you aren't prepared. Protect yourself with the proper clothing and take breaks in a warm environment.

Winter Savings on Amtrak Fares

The weather outside might get frightful, but this winter, savings on Amtrak travel are delightful. Missouri River Runner passengers can save 20 percent on adult fares for travel Jan. 2 through March 31.

Book your seat using discount code V539 effective Jan. 1. Reservations are required at least one day in advance of travel on the route between Kansas City and St.

Louis, which includes stops at Kirkwood, Washington, Hermann, Jefferson City, Sedalia, Warrensburg, Lee's Summit and Independence.

Savings are possible by booking through the "Deals" tab at Amtrak.com or by calling 800-USA-RAIL. You can also purchase tickets using Amtrak eTicketing and simply print your boarding documents from any printer or present them on board electronically via your smartphone.

Terms and conditions vary. Some blackout dates and other applicable restrictions apply, including advance reservation and purchase requirements, which are displayed on Amtrak.com. The offer is valid for coach seats and is dependent upon availability.



Central Office Happenings



Familiar Face, New Position

Chuck Gohring assumed his new position as Assistant Director of MoDOT's Motor Carrier Services Division on Jan. 1. He is excited to start his new role and to further serve the motor carrier industry.

"Trucking is a vital part of Missouri's economic strength and security," said Gohring. "I look forward to partnering with industry to advance safety, security and the efficient movement of freight."

Chuck has many years' experience with MCS, most recently as Administrator of Motor Carrier Investigations. He knows first-hand the challenges and rewards of serving our motor carrier customers.

In addition to serving on state and national commercial motor vehicle safety organizations, he has developed strong relationships with industry, roadside enforcement and other external safety partners.

As he assumes his new position, Chuck will continue his dedication to providing excellent customer service.



One Big Dog

Children's character Clifford the Big Red Dog was in downtown Jefferson City for a photo shoot when he happened to stop by MoDOT for a quick visit.

Clifford continued smiling for the camera in the MoDOT lobby, along with customer relations staff members Janette Vomund and Kellen Burns.

Meet With Deferred Compensation Rep

Don Wilson, CFP®, with the State of Missouri Deferred Compensation Plan, will be available to meet with employees.

This visit will give employees the opportunity



to increase contributions, change beneficiaries, or ask questions about the plan.

Date/Location:

Jan. 23 - 1320 Creek Trail Drive in I-55
Jan. 24 - 801 MoDOT Drive, Red Room
Jan. 28 - 601 W. Main in the HR Library
Jan. 29 - 105 W. Capitol, Room 203

Time: Meetings will be scheduled from 8:30 to 3:30 p.m. in 30 minute intervals.

Contact: Bobbie Uballez at 573-526-1046 to schedule an appointment.

For More Information: [Deferred Compensation Meeting Flier](#)



Opportunity for Donating Blood
The need is constant. The gratification is instant. Please Give.

Fri., Jan. 17
10 a.m to 3 p.m
Capital Mall Community Room

Tues., Jan. 21
9 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Truman Building - 4th Floor Auditorium

Pizza will be served during the blood drive.

You can schedule an appointment online at www.redcrossblood.org and enter Sponsor Code MOState, or call 1-800-RED CROSS.

Connections

The mission of Connections is to be a source of Missouri Department of Transportation news and feature articles that connect employees statewide.

Customer Relations - MoDOT
P.O. Box 270, Jefferson City, MO 65102
573.751.2840 / www.modot.org

Editor: Tammy Wallace

Comments & Suggestions

We would like to hear from you. Send comments and suggestions to Tammy Wallace at Tammy.Wallace@modot.mo.gov.

Mission

Our mission is to provide a world-class transportation experience that delights our customers and promotes a prosperous Missouri.

To view or print other pages, click on the links below:



Connections

A Publication for Employees of the Missouri Department of Transportation

January 16, 2014

Northwest
District

[Home](#)
[Central Office](#)

Districts

[Northwest](#)
[Northeast](#)
[Kansas City](#)
[Central](#)
[St. Louis](#)
[Southwest](#)
[Southeast](#)

[Archives](#)

[Print Page](#)

[Print
Entire Edition](#)

Helping Each Other Dig Out of the Snow

When bad weather hits, MoDOT's One Team mind set helps all of us. This winter weather season has already seen the Northwest District both receiving and giving help as well as learning about the differences in other regions' operations. Since the Dec. 12 - 14 snow fight, the Northwest District has hosted one crew each from the Southwest and Central districts, and sent almost 30 employees to the St. Louis District.

On Jan. 4, 2014, Maintenance Supervisors Bill Gimse and Ed Montgomery led two twelve-person teams of volunteers. Gimse's team worked out of Festus and De Soto, while Montgomery's team worked from Gray Summit. "It's not hard to find people who are willing to step up and take that extra challenge," said Northwest District Maintenance and Traffic Engineer Marty Liles. "I have a lot of respect for the MoDOT employees that go to other areas of the state and help out in times of need."



Northwest District crews helped St. Louis crews battle deep snow during the Jan. 4-7, 2014, snow fight. This photo was taken on Interstate 55.

Each vehicle sent to help had two people assigned to it – one for the night shift and one for the day shift. Because the trucks were in operation around the clock, an equipment technician also accompanied both teams. Montgomery said it didn't matter if it was our truck or their truck, Terry Beets, equipment technician from Trenton, was Johnny on the Spot. "It was like watching the pit crew on a race track!"

One difference between plowing in Northwest Missouri and St. Louis is the fact that they use "eyes in the sky." These cameras across the St. Louis District proved very beneficial for the crews from other districts, as well as the seasonal and contract workers who were not familiar with working these routes or with each other, because the team monitoring the cameras at the Traffic Management Center could help coordinate efforts and manage hot spots.

Both teams said they faced big challenges such as traffic and visibility. Gimse said that the snow was not a problem for the crew, but the traffic was something they had to get used to. He said on one of the shifts, it took them 45 minutes to go five miles. Also, many of the Northwest District crew deployed to St. Louis work in more rural buildings, where most, if not all of the routes are two lane roadways. Even though many of the crew members had never gang plowed or worked on six-lane interstates with guard cable, they tackled the tasks without question, following tow plows and working complex intersections, unlike any we have here in Northwest Missouri.

This will certainly not be our last time to offer or ask for help either. "We, as a department, have worked as a team to develop these strike teams to help our fellow districts," said Liles. "In these leaner times, we have to be more efficient."

And the help does not go unappreciated. Maintenance Supervisor Bradley Meyer from the Gray Summit building said the following, "The crew from the Northwest District that was sent to Gray Summit for the snowstorm was AWESOME... I don't think anyone could have gone around the whole state and found a better crew to send... All we had to do was tell them what we wanted and it got done. I have had several of my employees tell me that if the Northwest ever needs help they would like to volunteer to go."

Montgomery said he was very proud of the Strike Teams. "I'd go anywhere with them again. They represented the Northwest District really well."

Thank you to all the volunteers!

Beaufort Strike Team, deployed Dec. 12, 2013

Matt Johnson, Maintenance Crew Leader, Maryville; Roy Roush, Inter. Maintenance Worker, Maryville; Brian Hall, Senior Maintenance Worker, Tarkio; and Curtis Vance, Senior Maintenance Worker, Tarkio

Central District Strike Team, deployed to NW District Dec. 21, 2013:

Eric Kaiser, Maintenance Crew Leader, Jefferson City; Scott Campbell, Senior Maintenance Worker, Jefferson City; Eddie Frazier, Senior Maintenance Worker, Fulton; and Matt Canole, Senior Maintenance Worker, Fulton

Southwest District Strike Team, deployed to NW District Dec. 21, 2013

Ryan Boyd, Maintenance Crew Leader, Joplin; Kenny Reynolds, Senior Maintenance Worker, Joplin; Shane Dunham, Maintenance Crew Leader, Anderson; and Cody Sanny, Senior Maintenance Worker, Anderson

Strike Team One, deployed to Festus and De Soto Jan. 4, 2014

Bill Gimse, Maintenance Supervisor, St. Joe Bridge; Steve Martin, Senior Equipment Technician, Roving; Dameon Ellis, Inter. Maintenance Worker, Albany; David Simmerman, Senior Maintenance Worker, Albany; Rodney Martin, Maintenance Crew Leader, Grant City; Brad Clark, Maintenance Worker, Gallatin; Mike Abernathy, Senior Maintenance Worker, Milan; Donny Troester, Senior Maintenance Worker, Milan; Sam Vaughn, Senior Maintenance Worker, Princeton; Kenny Thomas, Inter. Maintenance Worker, Princeton; Tim McGaughey, Senior Maintenance Worker, Savannah; and CJ Bowman, Senior Maintenance Worker, Savannah

Strike Team Two, deployed to Gray Summit Jan. 4, 2014

Ed Montgomery, Maintenance Supervisor, Clearmont; Terry Beets, Inter. Equipment Technician, Trenton; Erich Post, Maintenance Worker, St. Joe; Cameron Hulet, Maintenance Worker, St. Joe; Brian Hall, Senior Maintenance Worker, Tarkio; Shannon Wiley, Maintenance Worker, Tarkio; Trent Shineman, Maintenance Crew Leader, Tarkio; Jake Harbin, Senior Maintenance Worker, Tarkio; Raymond Gebhards, Maintenance Crew Leader, Clearmont; Bill Blay, Maintenance Worker, Clearmont; Roy Roush, Inter. Maintenance Worker, Maryville; and Kolton Jones, Maintenance Worker, Maryville



Maintenance Supervisor Bill Gimse goes over safety issues and other information the group needed before they left the Northwest District for Festus.



Strike Team One readied their vehicles to leave from the Chillicothe Maintenance Building on the morning of Jan. 4, 2014.



The conditions that greeted Strike Team One when they first arrived in Festus.



Both teams encountered low visibility. It's difficult to see, but that is another snow plow's tail lights in the distance.



Even when the trucks were closer together, visibility was still difficult, especially on unfamiliar roads.



Can you spot the follow vehicles in the side mirror?



After the snow stopped, roads were still snow packed. Despite that, many motorists still decided to venture out.



A vehicle crash under an overpass led to this back up of traffic.



The sun was shining, but the single digit temperatures didn't help the materials work very quickly.



Most of Strike Team Two poses after their last St. Louis lunch and before heading home.

For more info

Marcia Johnson
Customer Relations Specialist
Northwest District
816.387.2495
Marcia.Johnson@modot.mo.gov

3602 N. Belt Highway
St. Joseph, MO 64506-1399

Comments & Suggestions

We would like to hear from you. Send comments and suggestions to Tammy Wallace at Tammy.Wallace@modot.mo.gov.

Mission

Our mission is to provide a world-class transportation experience that delights our customers and promotes a prosperous Missouri.

To view or print other pages, click on the links below:



Connections

A Publication for Employees of the Missouri Department of Transportation

January 16, 2014

Northeast
District

[Home](#)

[Central Office](#)

Districts

[Northwest](#)

[Northeast](#)

[Kansas City](#)

[Central](#)

[St. Louis](#)

[Southwest](#)

[Southeast](#)

[Archives](#)

[Print Page](#)

[Print
Entire Edition](#)

New Plows Already "Used"

There's nothing like getting into a brand new vehicle, even if it is for work.

"We already have more than 5000 miles on our new truck, and the majority of it is from plowing snow," said Shannon Thompson of Troy maintenance.

He is one of two operators in Troy who has been using one of the new tandem dump trucks received late last Fall.

"When you spend as much time as we do in a snow plow, it's nice to drive a new one," he said. But, he added, it takes a little getting use to. "We've learned you have to let the wing (plow) down before anyone can get in or out on the passenger side," he added. "It really does a good job pushing and a little more reach, has a lot of power, and we've used it a lot on our back roads, which helps out our motorgrader operators," he explained.

Fourteen new tandem dump trucks, costing about \$170,000 each, were all in operation during the last winter storm throughout the district. We were able to temporarily retain the old 14 trucks to use as a backup if any unit was expected to be down long term.

"These new trucks are part of the statewide plan to change the makeup of the snow fleet in this district, as we are moving towards more tandems and less single axles," said Sarah Marino, senior general services technician. Two of the units purchased have higher horsepower making them towplow capable.

This spring, all replaced trucks will be offered to cities, counties, and municipalities who have expressed interest in purchasing them. Then they will likely be listed for the public on an internet based auction sites such as Purplesave.com or BigIron.com for disposal.



Equipment Specialist Kevin Haner puts the web site decals on the last new truck for the Northeast District.

Hundreds Take the Pledge

In August, the Missouri Coalition for Roadway Safety teamed up with KTVO Television in Kirksville and several other sponsors to start the "Just Drive" Campaign. This campaign focused on the importance of wearing your seatbelt, not drinking and driving, putting the cell phone down while driving, as well as many other safety areas on the road. The campaign ran from August through the first week of January 2014.

"This effort reached so many individuals and the Coalition was thrilled we could be a part of it," said Marisa Brown-Ellison, facilitator for the Northeast Coalition for Roadway Safety. Over 360 individuals took the pledge to "Just Drive" and became eligible for prizes.

Twenty prize packages were given away through the course of the campaign (four each month). Prizes consisted of coupons from Lovegreen Motors in Kirksville, McDonald's gift certificates, key chains and t-shirts.

In the months of November and December, KTVO and members of the NE Coalition for Roadway Safety held assemblies at Adair County R-1 High School in Novinger, Green City R-1 High School and Macon R-1 High School in Macon to help get the message out. Kayle Denny from ThinkFirst Missouri was on hand at each assembly to tell her story of how a disabling crash has affected her life, because she was not wearing her seatbelt. During each assembly, four lucky students were the winners of some gift packages, one of which at each assembly included a Nook.

KTVO and the sponsors hope to make this an annual campaign. “If reaching out can change the driving habits of at least one driver, then that will be one more life saved on the road,” said Ellison. “The goal is for everyone to just drive safely,” she added.



Around the District...

The Results Are In!



The 2013 Battle of the Belt Competition has been completed, and the northeast area had 28 schools (out of 41 total) register for the competition. Twenty-two of those schools actively participated and completed the program. Overall, 10 schools were banner winners and the same school received the honor of Highest Overall and Most Improved. Be watching for upcoming pictures as presentations are made to the winning schools! We are so proud of the work and dedicated efforts our schools do to keep our teen drivers safe!

2013 Northeast Memories....and then some

A special 10 minute presentation has been put together with pictures of events and accomplishments of the Northeast District over the last year. To view this presentation, click on the picture below. We want to thank all the employees in the Northeast District for their efforts in 2013!



For more info

Marisa Brown-Ellison
Customer Relations Manager
Northeast District
573.248.2502
Marisa.Ellison@modot.mo.gov

1711 S. Highway 61

Comments & Suggestions

We would like to hear from you. Send comments and suggestions to Tammy Wallace at Tammy.Wallace@modot.mo.gov.

Mission

Our mission is to provide a world-class transportation experience that delights our

To view or print other pages, click on the links below:



Connections

A Publication for Employees of the Missouri Department of Transportation

January 16, 2014

Kansas City
District

Home

Central Office

Districts

Northwest

Northeast

Kansas City

Central

St. Louis

Southwest

Southeast

Archives

Print Page

Print
Entire Edition

MoDOT Employee Helps Rescue Motorist from Wrecked Vehicle During Winter Storm

While treating bridges with salt in the Kansas City area during the winter storm Saturday, Dec. 21, MoDOT Senior Maintenance Worker David Winship found himself in a unique position to do a little more than usual to help a motorist in need.

"I was just in the right place at the right time, and did what anyone would have done for someone else in need," Winship said.

Winship had just driven across the U.S. Highway 69 Bridge over southbound Interstate 29 in Clay County around 3 p.m., when he saw smoke rising over the side of the guardrail. He pulled his snowplow over to investigate and discovered a smoking vehicle down the embankment resting on its driver side, against some trees. No emergency vehicles were on scene yet, and as Winship approached the vehicle, he could hear someone yelling for help from inside the vehicle.



After calling 911, Winship determined he had to get the motorist out of the smoking vehicle, but because the doors were locked and the car was on its side, decided he had to get creative. Luckily, the vehicle was a convertible and Winship had a pocket knife with him that he used to cut a slit in the top. He then cut a hole large enough to pull the motorist from her vehicle with the help of another concerned motorist who pulled over to help.

Emergency responders arrived at the scene shortly after. After a big bear hug from the motorist to thank him for his efforts, Winship left to continue driving his route to help ensure other motorists could get to their destinations safely.

Winship, almost a five-year veteran with MoDOT, says incidents like this are unusual, but being prepared for whatever may come your way is always important.

"I'm just glad I was there to help - it was a blessing all around."

"Our employees are out there every day working in potentially hazardous conditions like clearing snow, patching potholes or working incidents," says MoDOT KC District Engineer Dan Niec. "We care about keeping people safe on our roads and our employees prove they will do whatever it takes to try to get everyone to their destination safely. David is another great example of the caliber of people who work for us, and I'm proud of each and every one of them."

Design-Build Project Draws Industry Leaders From Across the Nation

Contractors and consultants expecting to compete for the US 69 Missouri River Bridge Design-Build project joined MoDOT and the Kansas Department of Transportation to ask questions and network during an industry informational meeting on Jan. 9.

Approximately 98 industry leaders from across the country learned about the \$79 million design-build project funded by MoDOT and KDOT, the project goals, and expectations set by both DOTs. MoDOT Project Director Mark Fisher expressed the importance of having this bridge finished and opened to traffic by Oct. 1, 2016 in time for KDOT to begin replacing the Lewis and Clark Viaduct, minimizing impact to motorists in the area.

The US 69 Bridges, commonly referred to as the Fairfax Bridge and Platte Purchase Bridge over the Missouri River will be replaced with a single, four-lane structure including a shared-use path.



The goals for this project include open all lanes of traffic no later than Oct.1, 2016; deliver a competitively priced project that is both practical and economical; construct low maintenance bridge(s) that will provide at least a century of service; and create and sustain an exceptionally safe project work environment.

Following the meeting, MoDOT issued a Request for Qualifications to pre-qualify design-build teams. Once this process is complete, MoDOT will select a handful of the most qualified teams, and determine the best value proposer in July.

The highly successful design-build contracting process accelerates construction while giving both MoDOT and the design/builder more flexibility in delivering the project on schedule and within a set budget. The design-build process also allows design and construction to move forward concurrently, completed by the same contractor team with a quicker schedule than the traditional design-bid-build process.

For more info

Melissa Black
Customer Relations Manager,
Missouri Department of Transportation
Melissa.Black@modot.mo.gov
P: (816) 607-2027
F: (816) 365-0860

600 NE Colbern Road
Lee's Summit, MO 64086

Comments & Suggestions

We would like to hear from you. Send comments and suggestions to Tammy Wallace at Tammy.Wallace@modot.mo.gov.

Mission

Our mission is to provide a world-class transportation experience that delights our customers and promotes a prosperous Missouri.

To view or print other pages, click on the links below:



Connections

A Publication for Employees of the Missouri Department of Transportation

January 16, 2014

Central
District

[Home](#)

[Central Office](#)

Districts

[Northwest](#)

[Northeast](#)

[Kansas City](#)

[Central](#)

[St. Louis](#)

[Southwest](#)

[Southeast](#)

[Archives](#)

[Print Page](#)

[Print
Entire Edition](#)

First Commission Meeting of 2014 Takes Place in Jefferson City

The threat of bad weather necessitated a change of location from Columbia to Jefferson City for the Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission's first meeting of 2014, held on Jan. 8 at MoDOT's Central Office.

Mike Matthes, Columbia City Manager; Vicki Russell, Columbia Daily Tribune Publisher and Chairman of the Board of the Regional Economic Development, Inc.; and Dr. Jeffery Coughenour, Assistant Professor of Surgery and Emergency Medicine at the University of the Missouri School of Medicine, all appeared before the transportation commission. Matthes expressed his appreciation to both the commission and to MoDOT for their professionalism and their willingness to go the extra mile in support of Missouri's transportation system. He remarked that the only problem with MoDOT and the commission is that they do their jobs so well, everyone wants more.



MoDOT Director Dave Nichols (left) listens while Dr. Jeffery Coughenour (right) gives a presentation on the patterns, causes and effects of rural motor vehicle crashes.

The Columbia city manager mentioned the recent completion of the Diverging Diamond Interchange as an example of MoDOT's success. Matthes said the DDI was an improvement that "made life better" for the citizens of Columbia and was "working well." He also mentioned Columbia's desire for improvements to I-70 as an illustration of a community wanting more of a good thing.

Commissioner Kelley Martin agreed and said Columbia is a good example of a community that underscores the need to find an additional funding source for strengthening and maintaining Missouri transportation's infrastructure.

Russell recapped the amazing history of highways in Boone County, including the construction of the road that eventually became I-70. The Columbia Daily Tribune publisher spoke of industry in Columbia and cited 3M, Quaker Oats, Kraft Foods, Dorhn Trucking, Machens Automotive Group and Tribune Publishing as examples of how a reliable transportation system positively affects Columbia's economy. Russell stressed a need for the commission to adopt a "practical and equitable" plan to fund the rebuilding of I-70 and other highway projects that are "vital to the health and welfare, the quality of life and jobs for all Missourians." Russell added that a sales tax seemed to be the most likely option to fund these future projects. A link to Russell's full presentation can be found [here](#).

Dr. Coughenour closed with a presentation about the patterns, causes and effects of rural motor vehicle crashes. The doctor also highlighted the benefits of investing in our transportation infrastructure and educating citizens about highway safety.

District Employee Goes Above and Beyond, Recognized by Mayor on Facebook

MoDOT employees across the Central District responded to the latest snow fight with their traditional flair for customer service, but one employee's exceptional customer service caught the attention of Waynesville Mayor Luge Hardman.

Mayor Hardman took the time out of her schedule to post the following message on our Central District Facebook page:

"A note from a Waynesville EMT: 'I'd like to give a shout out to



Luge Hardman

A note from a Waynesville EMT:
Id like to give a shout out to MODOT, yesterday we had a situation in which we could not even get near the residence in our ambulance. We had to park and walk there and then for safety reasons needed the ambulance closer. Some of the snow drifts we had to walk through were over my knees. MODOT took time out of their very packed schedule and came to our aid. Not only did they plow us a path to the residence but also a another path out so we would not have to turn around and risk getting stuck. Over the years it is this kind of teamwork from road crews, city workers and all emergency responders which make me so grateful and proud to be part of this community.

Thanks for your work, Mayor Hardman

Unlike · Comment · 18 hours ago



MoDOT, yesterday we had a situation in which we could not even get near the residence in our ambulance. We had to park and walk there and then for safety reasons needed the ambulance closer. Some of the snow drifts we had to walk through were over my knees. MoDOT took time out of their very packed schedule and came to our aid. Not only did they plow us a path to the residence but also another path out so we would not have to turn around and risk getting stuck. Over the years it is this kind of teamwork from road crews, city workers and all emergency responders which make me so grateful and proud to be part of this community.' Thanks for your work, Mayor Hardman."

The plow driver mentioned in the Facebook message from the Waynesville Mayor was Central District Maintenance Crew Leader Doug Garner. Garner helped out without seeking any attention or recognition, but we'd like to join Mayor Hardman in saluting Doug for going above and beyond for our customers in the Central District!

Around the District



Morgan County 911 & Emergency Management sent us this photo of a district plow driver knocking the snow off the road to clear the way for our customers during the most recent January snowstorm.

Jefferson City Maintenance Crew Leader Eric Kaiser fills up a salt truck at the gas pump at the District Office. Kaiser was set to drive the truck to Boonville to replenish salt supplies lost during January's snow fights.



For more info

Sally Oxenhandler
Customer Relations Manager
Central District
573-522-3375
Sally.Oxenhandler@modot.mo.gov

1511 Missouri Boulevard
P.O. Box 718
Jefferson City, MO 65102

Comments & Suggestions

We would like to hear from you. Send comments and suggestions to Tammy Wallace at Tammy.Wallace@modot.mo.gov.

Mission

Our mission is to provide a world-class transportation experience that delights our customers and promotes a prosperous Missouri.

To view or print other pages, click on the links below:



Connections

A Publication for Employees of the Missouri Department of Transportation

January 16, 2014

St. Louis
District

[Home](#)

[Central Office](#)

Districts

[Northwest](#)

[Northeast](#)

[Kansas City](#)

[Central](#)

[St. Louis](#)

[Southwest](#)

[Southeast](#)

[Archives](#)

[Print Page](#)

[Print
Entire Edition](#)

Engineers Gain New Perspective on MoDOT

by Shaunda White

A pilot program helped two engineers get a better view of how MoDOT operates.

Last year, Stacey Smith and Philip Dietrich participated in the Rotational Development Pilot Program. Now known as Accelerated Professional Engineer Cross Training (APEX), this program offers select engineers opportunities to work in several departments within the district.



Philip Dietrich (left) and Stacey Smith (right) spoke highly of the knowledge and experience they gained from the APEX program.

Smith and Dietrich had the opportunity to cross-train in departments such as traffic, design, construction and bridge maintenance. Depending on the department, training could last for up to three months.

Smith, a senior highway designer, felt she learned a lot from her experience.

"Having the opportunity to participate in a program like this really changed my perception of MoDOT as a whole. I now better understand what each department does and how they work together. I am honored to have been selected to participate in this program and will always be an advocate," said Smith.

Dietrich, a senior construction inspector, appreciated the connections he was able to make.

"This program helps streamline the process for productivity and was one of the best networking opportunities I have ever had in my engineering career. I feel as if APEX will enhance the interest in long term careers at MoDOT for current and future engineers," he said.

The APEX class of 2014 started in January and will end on Dec. 31, 2014. This year's participants are:

- Belay Nerea – Senior Materials Inspector
- Arisa Prapaisilp – Senior Traffic Studies Specialist
- Stuart McNeil – Senior Highway Designer
- Jonathan Swagman – Senior Construction Inspector

They have all selected their areas of interest and have begun their rotations. For more information about APEX, please contact Bill Schnell at 314.453.1802.

District Engineer Shares Vision for MoDOT's Future Continued

by Andrew Gates

Editors Note: This article is continued information from newest District Engineer Greg Horn on his vision

for the St. Louis district.

How will your time overseeing construction projects impact your efforts as district engineer?

During my third year as a MoDOT employee, I became a Resident Engineer and worked on the highway 40 Missouri River Bridge project. I have been involved with many construction projects and have determined that the most successful projects always involve an extraordinary amount of time and effort, up front planning and have safety as their top priority.

The contractors whose projects are completed on time and under budget always have those common denominators. I understand how important it is for those things to happen on everything we do at MoDOT. Our planning and preparation to fight snow, manage incidents, fill potholes, design projects, provide public information, etc., will always pay off in the end.

What is your management philosophy?

I have worked in management positions for more than 26 years. What I know is that we have great employees at MoDOT which have the knowledge on how to get things done correctly. I trust that given the right direction, our employees can accomplish almost anything. I have witnessed it time and time again. I am blessed to work with a great group of leaders that together we collectively determine the department's direction, and then let the employees use their creativity to figure out how to accomplish the goals. I look forward to visiting all of the district's work units this year and meeting with each of them.



Steve Ashley named Safety Employee for November

by Shaunda White



Steve Ashley, Eureka maintenance worker, is selected as November Safety Employee of the Month.

Steve Ashley, a maintenance worker from the Eureka building, earned the Safety Employee of the month. He received the recognition because of his commitment to safety by ensuring that every employee within his environment is properly protected.

Steve began his employment with the department in June of 2004 and was nominated by Materials Inspector, Aziz Kadric.

While Aziz and another employee were attending Commercial Driver's License training at the Eureka facility, Steve took the initiative to locate and provide face masks to both employees. He quickly advised Aziz and his coworker of some recent sandblasting that took place nearby which required workers to wear supplied air respirators. Fortunately, the Eureka facility that they were attending training at was at distance that did not require supplied air respirators. However, Steve expressed his concern that there was a slight possibility that exposure could happen through the dust carried in the wind and extra precautions should be taken.

"Steve makes it apparent that he will go above and beyond to keep his coworkers safe. He displayed his commitment to safety by making sure the extra precautions were taken and that makes him well deserving of the safety employee of the month award," said Aziz Kadric.



The Missouri University of Science and Technology demonstrated a drone to MoDOT traffic engineers in December. They proposed using the remote control vehicle with a camera attached to determine the correct height to mount traffic cameras on department roadway. This could potentially let engineers determine any possible obstructions for roadway cameras without closing lanes and using a bucket truck or lift.



For more info

Marie Elliott
Customer Relations Manager
St. Louis District
314-453-1807
Marie.Elliott@modot.mo.gov

1590 Woodlake Drive
Chesterfield, MO 63017

Comments & Suggestions

We would like to hear from you. Send comments and suggestions to Tammy Wallace at Tammy.Wallace@modot.mo.gov.

Mission

Our mission is to provide a world-class transportation experience that delights our customers and promotes a prosperous Missouri.

To view or print other pages, click on the links below:



Connections

A Publication for Employees of the Missouri Department of Transportation

January 16, 2014

Home

Central Office

Districts

Northwest

Northeast

Kansas City

Central

St. Louis

Southwest

Southeast

Archives

Print Page

Print
Entire Edition

Southwest District

SW District at Work



STORM CLEAN UP - Joplin Maintenance Worker Cameron Bacal clears away snow from the intersection of Route 249 and Zora Road (Route VV) in Jasper County after a major winter storm rolled through the district in early January. (Photo/David Mitchell)



SIGNALING A CHANGE - Joplin Senior Electrician Gilbert Valdez installs a new flashing yellow left turn signal at I-44 and Route 39 in Mt. Vernon. It is the first flashing yellow signal in the Southwest District. See story below. (Photo/David Mitchell)

Construction Begins on New Interchange On Routes 13/82 in St. Clair County

by David Mitchell

Construction is underway on a new interchange at Routes 13/82 in St. Clair County near Osceola.

Safety is the motivating factor behind the project. Currently, Route 82 drivers must cross four lanes of Route 13 with its high speed traffic through the existing at-grade intersection. The new interchange will take those drivers over Route 13 traffic via a bridge.

There have been 28 reported crashes in the past 10 years (2004 – 2013) of which 21 were angle crashes. Two of those were fatalities.

“Angle crashes tend to be severe, especially when they occur on a high speed corridor like (Route) 13,” said District Traffic Engineer Joe Rickman.

Route 13 is an important highway used by drivers traveling between the Ozarks and Kansas City.

A community kick-off event that included a groundbreaking ceremony and public meeting was held on Jan. 13 at Osceola High School.

The groundbreaking featured comments from Osceola Mayor Larry Hutsler, State Rep. Warren Love and Southwest District Engineer



Julie Haden-Stiles, senior highway designer, talks with a couple of community members during a public meeting to discuss the construction timeline for the new Route 13/82 interchange south of Osceola. The new interchange, which is under construction now, is scheduled to be completed by Nov. 1, 2014. (Photo/David Mitchell)

Becky Baltz.

“It’s going to improve the flow of traffic,” said Mayor Hutsler, whose mother was involved in a crash several years ago at this intersection. “Even if it saves only one life in 20 years, it’s worth every penny.”

Rep. Love said there would be an effort this year to come up with a sales tax to pay for state highways, either in the Missouri Legislature or through the initiative petition process.

“We’re going to have to pony up if we want to keep good highways,” Love said.

“We really watch our budgets,” said Southwest District Engineer Becky Baltz, “and we were able to realize savings from other projects to help pay for this one.”

The \$7 million project includes a new Route 82 bridge which will carry traffic over Route 13 and new ramps. The project also will relocate Business Route 13’s intersection with Route 82 west of its current location and relocate a connection road’s access to Route 82 on the east side of the interchange.

Traffic Impacts:

- Route 82 will be closed from early April until completion of the project in early November. A detour will be signed using Route 13, Route 54, Route 83, Route 65 and Route 7.
- Business Route 13 also will be closed for short periods of time during their relocation.
- Major road closings are not expected until early April.

Project Background:

Planning for the interchange began in the late 1990s, but funding was an issue. A few years later, then-U.S. Sen. Christopher Bond secured a \$1.2 million federal earmark for the project and savings realized through the Bolder Five Year Direction provided money to proceed.

- Total cost - \$7 million:
- Construction - \$ 5.4 million
- Right of Way - \$200,000
- Engineering - \$1.4 million

The prime contractor is Lehman Construction, LLC of California, Mo.

Completion of the project is scheduled for Nov. 1, 2014.

First Flashing Yellow Left-Turn Arrows Installed in SW District in Mt. Vernon

by David Mitchell

The first flashing yellow left-turn arrows in use in the Southwest District are installed at Route 39 and I-44 in Mount Vernon.

The traffic signal equipment was modified and the new flashing yellow arrows were activated Dec. 18, 2013.

“The installation went very smoothly. That was probably due to the advance research and testing done in our signal shop late last summer,” said Traffic Supervisor Joe Dotson. “Signal modifications such as this begin in the shop with testing long before field installation.”

While this is the first location for this type of signal in the Southwest District, MoDOT is already using them elsewhere in Missouri, including Lebanon. The first ones in the state were installed in St. Louis in October 2006.

Other signals with yielding green left-turning movements in Mount Vernon will be converted to flashing yellow arrows later in 2014. Additional intersections are on the list to be converted, too, including Business Loop 44/Route 66 in Joplin and Duquesne.

Any new signal installations allowing a yielding left-turn will have the flashing yellow arrows.



Click image above to see a computer animation of the Route 13/82 interchange currently under construction near Osceola.



Joplin Senior Electrician Michael Marion makes final adjustments to the signal controller at the newly installed flashing yellow left turn arrows at I-44 and Route 39 in Mt. Vernon. (Photo/David Mitchell)

“Over time we will be converting all yielding left turn movements to the FYA (flashing yellow arrow) set up,” said Southwest District Traffic Engineer, Joe Rickman. “That way, we will eventually be consistent with the FYA pattern.”

Safe to Turn Left After Yielding

Use of flashing yellow left-turn arrows is considered an improvement to safety at signalized intersections. It provides a more direct message of caution to drivers to yield to oncoming traffic than does the circular green light.

A sign mounted next to the left-turn signal display explains the meaning of the flashing yellow arrow, saying, “Left Turn Yield on Flashing Arrow.”

National studies show “the flashing yellow left-turn arrow had fewer crashes than the traditional green ball yielding left-turn indication,” Rickman said.

So far, the flashing yellow left-turn arrows have worked well.

“We haven’t heard any public feedback in the Signal Shop so far,” Dotson said, “we’ve made no additional tweaks or adjustments to date.”

How a Flashing Yellow Left-Turn Arrow Works

When the yellow left-turn arrow begins flashing, oncoming vehicles will get a green light and will have the right-of-way.

A flashing yellow arrow also means drivers still can make a left turn, but only after first yielding to oncoming cars and trucks as well as pedestrians.

When the flashing yellow arrow stops flashing and becomes a steady yellow left-turn arrow, drivers should treat the non-flashing yellow arrow just like a standard yellow signal and prepare to stop before the red light appears.

Drivers need to remember, a flashing yellow left-turn arrow means they must yield to oncoming through-traffic and turn left cautiously only when they see an opening in the traffic coming toward them.

For more info

Bob Edwards
Customer Relations Manager
Southwest District
417.895.7713
Robert.Edwards@modot.mo.gov

3025 E. Kearney
P.O. Box 868
Springfield, MO 65801

Comments & Suggestions

We would like to hear from you. Send comments and suggestions to Tammy Wallace at Tammy.Wallace@modot.mo.gov.

Mission

Our mission is to provide a world-class transportation experience that delights our customers and promotes a prosperous Missouri.

To view or print other pages, click on the links below:



Connections

A Publication for Employees of the Missouri Department of Transportation

January 16, 2014

Southeast
District

Home

Central Office

Districts

Northwest

Northeast

Kansas City

Central

St. Louis

Southwest

Southeast

Archives

Print Page

Print
Entire Edition

Steve's Legacy of Passion for Life, Loyalty

Team MoDOT Pays Tribute

From his contagious laugh and fondness of sweater vests, to his aversion to Maddie the long-haired cat, everyone has their favorite memories of Steve Hermann, former MoDOT Human Resources Manager. Steve had a unique combination of quick wit and a warm, caring personality that made him an instant friend and confidant to everyone he met.

"His radiant smile and energetic manner were a powerful presence. I instantly knew that Steve was someone that I would be happy to know," said Rudy Nickens, MoDOT Equal Opportunity and Diversity Director, of first meeting Steve.

Steve not only made a great first impression; he also built many lasting, close friendships.

"From a personal perspective, Steve was a loyal and loving friend. He always made you feel that you were important to him," said Beth Ring, MoDOT Information Systems Director.

Among his friends, he was most well-known for his interesting, nearly unbelievable stories.

"He was a great storyteller, although we sometimes questioned if some of the stories were made up," recalled Melissa Crowley, Senior Customer Service Representative. "He loved to entertain at home, and I had the pleasure of spending time with Steve and Tim. I will always hold those memories close to my heart."

One of Steve's stories made a very lasting impression on Don Edgar, Maintenance Supervisor at Park Hills.

"I just can't forget one of the stories Steve told me about his dad," explained Edgar. "Steve said that he would tell his mom things on his dad, and one day while Steve was riding through the car wash with his dad, he got a bit of payback. His dad rolled down the window while Steve went through for telling on him. It was hilarious."

Steve's natural ability to put people at ease, solve problems and make fast friends made him the perfect fit for his career in Human Resources.

"He was here for the employees," said Alberta Green, Senior Traffic Technician. "Steve was trustworthy, and everyone knew he was acting in the best interest of the employees."



Former MoDOT Human Resources Manager Steve Hermann passed away Jan. 5 due to a car accident in Oklahoma City. Photos from Steve's family and MoDOT friends are available by clicking the image above or visiting www.flickr.com/photos/modot_se/.

Steve began his MoDOT career as the Human Resources Manager for the Southeast District in March 2007. In July 2011, he continued his work as part of the MoDOT team as Human Resources Manager for the Southwest District. He served in this position until September 2013.

"I appreciated his amazing ability to talk to anyone about anything, no matter whether the topic was easy or difficult," said Becky Baltz, Southwest District Engineer.

Steve joined the SW District as the reorganization and reductions in staff



Visit <http://youtu.be/kmAM-PHHA5E> or click the image above to watch Steve's Elvis impersonation.

through the Bolder Five-year Direction were underway. Although he was new to the SW District during this difficult time, it comes as no surprise that employees instantly felt comfortable with Steve.

“Steve Hermann, was a true testament to a ‘Human’ Resources Manager! No matter the situation—good or bad—he always made employees feel good about themselves and helped them to strive to be the best that they could be,” said Sue Sifford, Senior Risk Management Technician. “God broke the mold when he made Steve.”

While Steve served many different roles in the lives of MoDOT employees, his co-workers and many friends, his legacy is consistent. Steve will always be remembered for his passion for life, loyalty, optimism and striving to improve the lives of those around him.

Please [click here](#) to read more comments and stories shared by Steve's MoDOT co-workers and friends.

Customers 'Like' MoDOT's Southeast District



A recent post that included a video of a tow plow in action received a lot of attention on the Southeast District's Facebook page.

While schoolchildren across the Southeast District have been delighted with the number of snow days this winter season, MoDOT employees are looking forward to warmer weather. The first winter storm struck the Southeast District on Dec. 5, and was followed by additional storms over the next several weeks.

Although more winter weather is not welcomed in the Southeast District, the storms did prove to be beneficial for the district's Facebook page. “Likes” of the page have increased from around 2,700 before the first storm to more than 7,300.

“Our Facebook community has rapidly grown, and members continue to express their thanks and well-wishes to our crews,” said Nicole Thieret, Southeast District Customer Relations Manager.

Thieret attributes the growth to the storms in combination with ads the district utilized on Facebook.

“Our crews and other individuals working in these emergency situations always go above and beyond,” she said. “I think the storms definitely brought the hardwork of our MoDOT crews to the forefront of customers’ minds, and the ads helped

make us more accessible.”

In addition to receiving kind comments from customers, the Southeast District's Facebook team also uses the page to provide updates.

“We typically post photos submitted by MoDOT personnel, snapshots of the Traveler Information Map and other weather-related information,” added Thieret.

To check out the Southeast District's Facebook page, please visit: www.facebook.com/MoDOTSoutheast.